



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Roles and Responsibilities of School Councils

A three-hour training for experienced school-based decision making membership.

Facilitator Guide

Welcome and introductions	15 minutes
Understand the basic legal functions of a school council	60 minutes
Understand the roles and responsibilities of each school council member	20 minutes
BREAK	15 minutes
Understand how school council committees can be collaborative team	30 minutes
Understand how school council meetings can be inclusive and effective	30 minutes
Closing and evaluations	10 minutes

Materials Needed

- Roles and Responsibilities Booklet – one for each participant
- Individual name tags or table tents – one for each participant
- computer for PowerPoint presentation
- Internet connectivity
- easel (optional)
- Sticky notes (optional)
- highlighters (optional)
- chart paper (optional)
- markers (optional)

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome each participant. If working with school council members from multiple school councils, ensure that schools are sitting together. Review the materials that are provided. Distribute highlighters and sticky notes (if providing). Encourage each to participate fully and to ask questions. Create a “parking lot” for questions. Review the training booklets provided to each participant. Review the session objectives.

Session Overview and Student Achievement

Ask participants to describe the main purpose of any school council. Read the student achievement paragraph, emphasizing the main focus of the school council being student achievement.

Read through the introductory paragraph.

Have participants read the section of the statute. Have them underline or highlight the clause that sets the stage for their main responsibility. Work through each word or phrase, emphasizing the responsibility. Have the participants name factors for student achievement. Share if appropriate.

KRS 160.345(2)(c)1: The school council shall have the responsibility to set school policy consistent with district board policy which shall provide an environment to enhance the students' achievement and help the school meet the goals established by KRS 158.645 and 158.6451. The principal shall be the primary administrator and the instructional leader of the school, and with the assistance of the total school staff shall administer the policies established by the school council and the local board.

... shall	When shall is written in statute, it means that the task must be complete; there is not an option in this case.
... responsibility to set school council policy	With the word shall, the school council must set policies for the school.
... consistent with district board policy	The policies that the school council adopts must align with the local board's policies. It cannot contradict or change any process or procedure that the district has established.
... shall provide an environment to enhance the student's achievement	Shall is used again. All of the policies that the school council adopts must be focused on setting the stage so that all students can achieve at high levels.
... help the school meet the goals established ...	The policies must also provide the format for the school to meet state assessment goals.

Basic Legal Function of a School Council

As you review the chart, have participants notice that not all of the responsibilities fall in the SBDM statute. Remind them that their responsibilities lie with all aspects of increasing student achievement. Refer them back to the main purpose of enhancing student achievement. Have the participants highlight or underline where a policy is specifically noted.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	
Policy for the determination of curriculum	KRS 160.345(2)(i)1
Policy to determine the assignment of students to classes and programs	KRS 160.345(2)(i)3
Policy to determine the planning and resolution of issues regarding instructional practices	KRS 160.345(2)(i)6
Policy for the selection of extracurricular programs	KRS 160.345(2)(i)8
Policy for the procedures for determining alignment with state standards, technology utilization, and program appraisal	KRS 160.345(2)(i)10
Policy for determining the writing process	KRS 158.6453(7)(c)
Policy for implementing advanced placement, international baccalaureate, dual enrollment, dual credit (secondary schools)	KRS 160.348(2)
Policy for implementing parent involvement (Title I, Part A, funded schools)	ESEA (a.k.a. No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)
Policy for determining structure of the primary program (elementary schools)	KRS 158.031(4)
Schedules, Staffing, and Safe and Healthy Facilities	
Policy for determining the assignment of instructional and non-instructional staff time	KRS 160.345(2)(i)2
Policy for the determination of the schedule of the school day and week	KRS 160.345(2)(i)4
Policy for the determination of use of school space	KRS 160.345(2)(i)5
Policy for the selection and implementation of discipline and classroom management techniques	KRS 160.345(2)(i)7
Policy to outline the process for the adoption of emergency management plan	KRS 160.345(2)(i)9
Policy to determine the procedures for consultation	KRS 160.345(2)(i)11

Policy to establish wellness procedures (elementary)	KRS 160.345(11)
Policy to establish wellness and nutrition procedures (for schools receiving Federal funds for free/reduced lunch)	Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2012
Configuration of flexible grouping	KRS 158.031
Principal selection	KRS 160.345(2)(h)
Improvement Planning and Budgets	
Annual review of data as shown on state and local student assessments and program assessments	KRS 160.345(2)(j)
Number of persons per job classification	KRS 160.345(2)(f)
Determining textbooks, instructional materials, and student support services	KRS 160.345(2)(g)
School budget administration (aligned with district procedures)	KRS 160.345(3)(a)
Assessment of individual student progress (aligned with district procedures)	KRS 160.345(3)(b)
School improvement planning process (aligned with district procedures)	KRS 160.345(3)(c)
Professional development plans (aligned with district procedures)	KRS 160.345(3)(d) KRS 160.345(8) KRS 158.060(4)
Operating Procedures	
Committees	KRS 160.345(2)(c)2
Meetings and meeting schedule	KRS 160.345(2)(d) KRS 160.345(2)€ KRS 61.810

Limitations

Have the participants work in groups to determine why these are not responsibilities of the school council. Share out responses.

Limitation	Reasoning
Run the school on a day-to-day basis	The school council's role is to develop the policies and processes in which the school operates. The statute notes that the school council develops the policies that are implemented by the principal and school staff [KRS 160.345(2)(c)1].
Break contracts	The school council operates under the district policies. Therefore, it must honor all district contracts including teacher bargaining contracts.
Break state and/or federal statutes and regulations	The school council is the governance structure of the school, operating under the district policies and procedures. Even though it has authorities in specific areas, it must follow the state and/or federal guidance for specific programs and/or initiatives.
Spend funds that the school does not have	The school council must operate within the budget provided through the district finance office. It cannot "go into the red."
Make decisions outside its areas of authority	The school council has specific areas designated in the statutes in which it has authority. However, it must work within the board policies to develop its procedures in these areas. For areas not specified as under school council authority, the school council would need to apply for a waiver from the district to implement [KRS 160.345(3)(g)].

Scenarios: The policies in the scenarios had some specific issues. During discussion, refer them back to the areas of authority. If they have policies such as these in their policy manuals, encourage them to review them to ensure that they have the authority to implement them in their schools.

Attendance Policy This policy does not fall within school council authority. In order for the school to implement this policy, it would need a waiver of district policy.	Program Review Policy This policy does fall within instructional practices and staff professional learning. However, the responsibilities of Program Reviews are limited to select persons.
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The Roles and Responsibilities of Each School Council Member

Read/scan the description of each of the role groups. Reinforce that in order to have a successful and efficient school council, each group must participate. That participation must be respected and valued. After a discussion, have participants complete the reflection.

How School Council Committees Can Be a Collaborative Team

Read and elaborate on the section. Work through the examples as a large group.

Extracurricular – discusses and evaluates extracurricular activities	Standing or Ad Hoc?
Discipline – discusses and evaluates the discipline data and policy	Standing or Ad Hoc?
Professional development – plans and coordinates professional learning opportunities with the improvement planning process	Standing or Ad Hoc?
Improvement planning – discusses the school's needs assessment and develops improvement strategies and activities	Standing or Ad Hoc?
Curriculum and instruction – discusses and evaluates the school's curriculum and instructional strategies	Standing or Ad Hoc?
Interviewing teacher candidate – completes the interviewing process as part of the school council's consultation policy	Standing or Ad Hoc?

Read through the committee policy and discuss its strengths and concerns. This can be done as a large group or at tables in smaller groups. Have the participants complete the reflection.

The policy lists the committees but not what each committee's responsibilities are. Participation is sought but not encouraged.

How School Council Meetings Can Be Inclusive and Effective

Facilitator: All of the answers are false. Reasons are noted beginning on the next page.

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| False | 1. School council and committee meetings are by invitation only. |
| False | 2. Principals can call special school council meetings whenever they need as long as all members are notified by phone or email. |
| False | 3. Special council meetings can only be called by the principal. |
| False | 4. School councils can go into closed sessions for any reason. |
| False | 5. Open meetings rules apply when the school council makes decisions, but not if they only discuss the issues. |

- Any school council or committee meeting is open to the public.

2. The principal may call a special meeting as needs arise; however, the agenda must be delivered to each school council member by hand delivery, fax or email. Notification by phone is not allowable.
3. The principal may call a special meeting or it may be called by a majority of the membership.
4. The school council may only go into closed session to discuss personnel (consultation and/or principal selection), potential litigation and the specifics around the school's emergency plan.
5. Open meetings statutes apply every time there is a quorum of the school council members present and school council business is discussed.

Read through the requirements around Open meetings. Elaborate as needed. Review each section clearing up any confusion or misconception.

Look at the sample agenda. Discuss the strengths and limitations. What else may need to be included? Strengths and other topics will vary based on the participants. Have participants share items they have on their agendas, including the reasoning as to why they are included monthly.

Review the reasons for keeping accurate records. Include examples from your experiences. Reinforce the last sentence in the paragraph.

Keeping accurate minutes is another responsibility of the school council. The minutes are the official record of the school council decisions. For practical purposes, if the school council minutes do not reflect a decision, then the decision did not occur.

Reinforce the importance of minutes. Discuss with participants how minutes are taken. If most participants state that one of the school council members takes the minutes, discuss with the group other options. If a school council member is taking the minutes, then he or she cannot fully participate. Have the participants complete the final reflection.

Closing and Evaluations

Have participants complete the reflection. While they are completing the reflection and pondering any final thoughts, give each participant an evaluation to complete and an EILA certificate. Thank participants for their attendance and attention.